

While it is clear the mainstream culture was moving away from a Christian civilization, the perpetual question for *fin de siècle* evangelicals remained essentially about how to reassert their cultural dominance (174).

The real contribution and strength of the book is its focus on global Christianity. Fundamentalism was immensely varied. Comparisons between variations in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand created useful points of contrast. Canada, for example, exhibited a much more moderate, and less self-assured, version of evangelicalism. Those with a proclivity toward militant Fundamentalism tended to migrate south across the border, or, at least drum up support during American preaching tours. Canadian Fundamentalism remained weak and never were a homogenous lot. In this way, national variations and permutations augmented distinctive denominational features and varieties (185–187).

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the story of evangelicalism. While many books have been written about World War I, particularly as related to religion, this book offers a surprisingly fresh and cogent analysis that builds upon the latest research about evangelicalism, most notably through creative uses of the Bebbington quadrilateral, as a valuable contribution about evangelicalism in its own right.

Adventist International Institute
of Advanced Studies
Silang, Cavite, Philippines

MICHAEL W. CAMPBELL

Wilkins, Steve, ed. *Christian Ethics: Four Views*. Spectrum: Multiview Book. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017. iv + 221 pp. Softcover. USD 21.00.

Christian Ethics: Four Views is one of the latest offerings from IVP Academic in their series called “Spectrum: Multiview Books.” The volume is edited and introduced by Steve Wilkins, professor of philosophy and ethics at Azusa Pacific University. The four main contributors are as follows: First, representing Virtue Ethic is Brad J. Kallenberg, professor of theology and ethics at the University of Dayton (Ohio). Second, representing Natural Law Ethics is Claire Brown Peterson, associate professor of philosophy at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky. Third, representing Divine Command Theory is John Hare, Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology at Yale University. Fourth, representing Prophetic Ethics is Peter Goodwin Heltzel, associate professor of systematic theology at New York Theological Seminary.

Wilkins launches the book with an introductory chapter orienting the reader to the forthcoming discussion. This chapter is essential reading, especially for those not highly trained in ethical theory. Wilkins notes that a major area of discussion within Christianity is the argument over which are the God-ordained sources of moral knowledge: Scripture? Reason? History? Church Tradition? Some combination? Other questions probe the area of human ability, especially how much or how little human moral abilities are impacted by sin. Wilkins surveys the basic roots—both philosophical and

theological—of each ethical theory, giving the reader the necessary background to better grasp the forthcoming essays and responses. All four presenters appear to depend on this introduction to supply presuppositions otherwise not stated in their own essays.

In his presentation of Virtue Ethics, Brad Kallenberg contends that ethics is less about a code of conduct for given situations, and more about who you are—moral character. Forming the right character based on habitual virtues will guide the individual in specific situations. Since the inculcation of virtuous habits is paramount, Kallenberg makes heavy use of physical training and behaviorist methods for forming habits of virtue. In particular, a Christian virtue ethics would focus on how one's habits contribute to the Christian communal goal of shaping that community's life to be like Christ, though exactly what this means is left unexplored. Kallenberg illustrates his ethics through an analysis of how social media can inculcate habits of covetousness which undermine Christian virtue.

Natural Law theorist, Claire Brown Peterson, expresses significant agreement with Kallenberg but criticizes his position for not supplying the “why” behind virtue ethics. She asserts that Natural Law Ethics fills that need. For her, morality is grounded in our *telos*, that is, our ideal nature as made by our Creator. Moral good is the embodied living out of our ideal humanity as designed by God. Peterson cites Rom 2:14 as evidence God has written this natural law into all humans, which makes this morality universal, not just for Christians. Unlike Aristotle and Aquinas, who envisioned moral good as fulfilling the rationality of our nature by living rationally, Peterson sees moral good as implementing our design to live in community and interdependence, which fosters human flourishing and thriving.

John Hare contends that morality is grounded in divine commands. Specifically, he contends that the “ought” only comes by divine command. There are many goods in life that are optional for humans, but out of that larger set of goods, God has commanded only a subset to be obligatory. While Hare briefly cites Ps 119 and God's law, asserting that God's law is relevant to Christians, he offers no practical guidance on how one knows what God's laws command. This is partly because Hare seems to use his allotted space mostly for raising potential objections to his theory, then refuting them, and partly because he frames much of his argument through the lenses of Immanuel Kant and Duns Scotus. Finally, he argues that the doctrine of divine design, which is central to natural law, shows it is actually rooted in a divine command.

Peter Goodwin Heltzel presents a form of Prophetic Ethics. Heltzel's ethics are heavily tied to the American political scene, especially in matters related to current movements questing for “social justice.” He advocates an “innovative” interpretational approach to Scripture loosely based on a few Old Testament passages decrying oppression of the poor and other marginalized groups. He also casts Christ as a political activist leading a revolutionary movement against both the Jewish and Roman systems of oppression. Heltzel criticizes the other views for focusing primarily on personal morality while ignoring social sins and societal problems. By contrast, Heltzel depicts sin

primarily as a structural problem in society, with little focus on personal sin. Christianity becomes primarily, if not solely, about implementing the kingdom of God—as understood through the social justice paradigm—into our current society and politics.

This book does an admirable job of accomplishing its apparent purposes, namely to introduce the reader to four differing approaches to ethics within Christianity, along with the associated debates. Wilkens's introductory chapter is especially apt at orienting the reader to the large traditions behind each theory represented. Furthermore, each author is exemplary in treating the other views with Christian respect and courtesy, while raising significant questions for consideration.

One possible weakness, however, is that all four of the main authors—especially in their interactions with Heltzel—come across as being politically progressive or liberal in their approach to societal issues. This seems to result in a measure of group-think, which may minimize some of the tough issues and questions others might raise. Heltzel, for example, chastises virtue ethicist Stanley Hauerwas for arguing that the church should not be involved in politics because the church is to be an alternative community of virtue distinct from general society. How much better might this book be if Hauerwas could have interacted with Heltzel rather than Kallenberg. Additionally, the book seems to have no truly “conservative” or Evangelical voice in the mix. What if an evangelical, such as Albert Mohler, was part of the discussion? Such differences in perspective would significantly enrich this volume.

Kallenberg's depiction of virtue ethics is to be commended for recognizing the importance of intentionally forming moral habits and character through training processes. In situations where moral codes may not give clear direction, who one is in their character will do much to guide that individual through the decision-making process. Kallenberg is also to be commended for raising questions about how social media negatively impacts Christian character formation. One key weakness is that Kallenberg's description of character formation seems highly behaviorist, without consideration for the doctrine of human depravity due to sin. As such, his ethics seem unintentionally favorable to a Pelagian perspective.

Peterson rightly contends that there is a strong relationship between virtue ethics and Natural Law Theory (NLT). For her, NLT provides the undergirding rationale for why we need to develop certain habits and character traits. Peterson invokes divine design as the foundation of morality. Morality is living in a way that fulfills the ideal design for human life intended by God. While Peterson recognizes that sin has perverted that ideal design, the doctrine of human depravity has little impact on her optimism about human ability to deduce moral guidance through knowledge of our *telos*. Peterson also contends that that belief in God is not necessary to rationally recognize inherent objective goods and evils, and thus morality can operate independently of belief in deity. This may be challenged, for atheistic evolution rejects any concept of design in nature, yet divine design is claimed as a core foundation for Peterson's NLT. A number of thinkers, however, have noted that if there

is no divine design, then morality is reduced to socially constructed norms established by whomever holds power.

Hare correctly contends that the divine design needed for NLT is a form of divine command. Thus, every moral obligation is grounded in a divine directive. Exactly how the divine commands are known is not made clear except, perhaps, through a brief defense of the need for biblical law. Codes like the Ten Commandments, however, are not directly mentioned. The deficiency in addressing how divine commands are received and known by humans may be partly explained by another weakness, namely, that Hare devotes most of his chapter to building and defending the philosophical plausibility of Divine Command Theory and to refuting corollary objections.

Hare makes a significant contribution, however, by addressing the Euthyphro Dilemma from Plato's *Dialogues*. This dilemma has been a major criticism leveled against morality based in divine commands. It charges that divine commands must be arbitrary (i.e., there is no objective, evidential means of knowing good and evil) or that God must be subject to a standard of morality which is higher than himself (God is not absolutely sovereign). Those leveling this charge usually advocate for the latter option, and allege that good and evil are determined consequentially without need of divine aid. Hare wisely avoids the typical Christian response that God is by nature good, therefore whatever He commands is good, because opponents will charge that this shifts the arbitrary issue back one step without solving the problem, while others contend the point is a form of circular reasoning. Instead, Hare exegetes Socrates's conversation with Euthyphro, contending that Socrates never proved the assumptions he led Euthyphro to embrace. Thus, the argument is logically deficient due to the premises being unproven.

Heltzel's presentation of prophetic ethics differed significantly from the first three, being much less philosophical and much more biographical and homiletical. Kallenberg rightly criticizes Heltzel's lack of exegetical and philosophical rigor, saying, "Apparently prophetic ethics needs there to be in place skilled (aka virtuous) scholars who have devoted their lives to the study of ancient languages and texts . . . in order to guide those who today would put ancient texts into practice" (199–200).

Heltzel is to be commended for drawing our attention to social evils, but he does so by minimizing the concept of personal sin to such a degree that it plays no role in his argument. Sin becomes centered in socio-political structures, seeming to cast the marginalized as sinless victims. By depicting Prophetic Ethics as seeking to implement the Kingdom of God into human political structures, adherents of this view are left with only a small leap away from concluding that those presently marginalized are morally superior to those in power over them. Once such moral superiority is claimed, the emerging moral elite seem likely to seek to enforce their moral vision through political power, much as Catholics and Protestants persecuted and killed each other during the Reformation. Heltzel rightly laments the corruption of Christianity through alliance with political power structures, yet he proposes an alternative form of partnership which risks the same dangers. The doctrine

of human depravity would suggest that a change in social systems driven by the church will merely change the nature of the systemic sinfulness but cannot remove it. Furthermore, Heltzel offers no engagement with Jesus's prediction about the future fate of his followers. Rather than envisioning his disciples as social activists seeking justice, Jesus predicted they would be marginalized and persecuted by society (John 15:18–16:4; Matt 10:16–25). How might Heltzel reconcile such texts with his ethical model?

Does this mean Christians should not influence societal structures? Heltzel must be aware of historical movements led by individual Christians who influenced societal structures while avoiding the toxic alchemy that blends the church with politics. The nineteenth-century animal welfare movement in Europe provides such an example. Furthermore, John Wesley transformed British politics, not by organizing political action but by mass conversions to Christ, which happened to change voting patterns. These alternatives may address some of the concerns of prophetic ethics, but are not addressed by Heltzel.

This book is worthwhile reading and will stimulate thoughtful reactions across multiple theological perspectives. It challenges the reader to consider new and diverse perspectives in a respectful, congenial fashion, and makes a good addition to one's library.

Southern Adventist University
Collegedale, Tennessee

STEPHEN BAUER

Yarbro Collins, Adela, ed. *New Perspectives on the Book of Revelation*. BETL 291. Leuven: Peeters, 2017. ix + 644 pp. Softcover. USD 123.00.

The essays in this volume originate from the sixty-fourth Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense, which was held in Leuven on 23–25 July 2015. They assess the current state of research on the book of Revelation and explored some new approaches and perspectives seeking to move forward the scholarly study of the last book of the New Testament canon. In addition to the introduction, written by Adela Yarbro Collins, the work comprises twenty-six essays, of which fourteen were main papers at the colloquium. The volume is a polyglot collection with eighteen English, five German, and three French contributions organized into two parts: the main papers and seminars and the short papers. Interestingly, some of the “short” papers, such as those of Michael Labahn and Gerd J. Steyn, are significantly longer than a number of the main papers. Also, several essays in the second group deserve the epithet of “main” contribution, since by raising new questions and utilizing new approaches they address promising prospects for furthering academic discussions on Revelation.

The main papers were written mostly by renowned scholars, well established in the research of the book of Revelation. Some of them have authored commentaries or notable monographs on Revelation, such as Adela Yarbro Collins, Steven J. Friesen, Martin Karrer, Thomas Witulski, Jacques Descreux, Craig R. Koester, and Judith L. Kovacs. A number of short papers came from the younger generation of scholars, who recently carried out doctoral research on the book of Revelation or in other areas having potential for